U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

News Release

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ICE ARRESTS 2 DRUG SMUGGLERS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—A 39-year-old man from the Dominican Republic was arrested here Thursday by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents for attempting to smuggle 61 pellets of heroin.

Basilio Manzueta's suspicious and erratic body language prompted U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) inspectors to refer him to a secondary inspection following his arrival at the Luis Munoz Marin International Airport.

Manzueta's inconsistencies during the CBP inspection led ICE agents to transport him to a nearby hospital in Carolina where he voluntarily consented to an x-ray examination. The examination revealed foreign objects lodged inside Manzueta's body. On Aug. 26th, Manzueta expelled 14 of 61 pellet-shaped objects that were field tested and reacted positive to heroin.

"DHS partners are working together in Puerto Rico to detect those who try to circumvent our immigration and customs laws," said Lydia St. John-Mellado, acting special agent-in-charge of ICE investigations in Puerto Rico. "We will simply not allow the proliferation of illegal drugs in our jurisdiction."

In a similar incident Saturday, ICE agents arrested 33-year-old Oscar Martinez, a citizen of the Dominican Republic for attempting to smuggle 1.89 kilograms of cocaine and 1.29 kilograms of "ecstasy". Martinez, who arrived in San Juan from the Dominican Republic, carried the contraband in hidden compartments in his luggage.

Manzueta and Martinez were charged with violations of Title 21, United States Code (USC), Sections 841 and 952. Both are in ICE custody at the Metropolitan Detention Center (MDC) in Guaynabo awaiting the outcome of their cases.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.